Annabelle & Aiden

presents

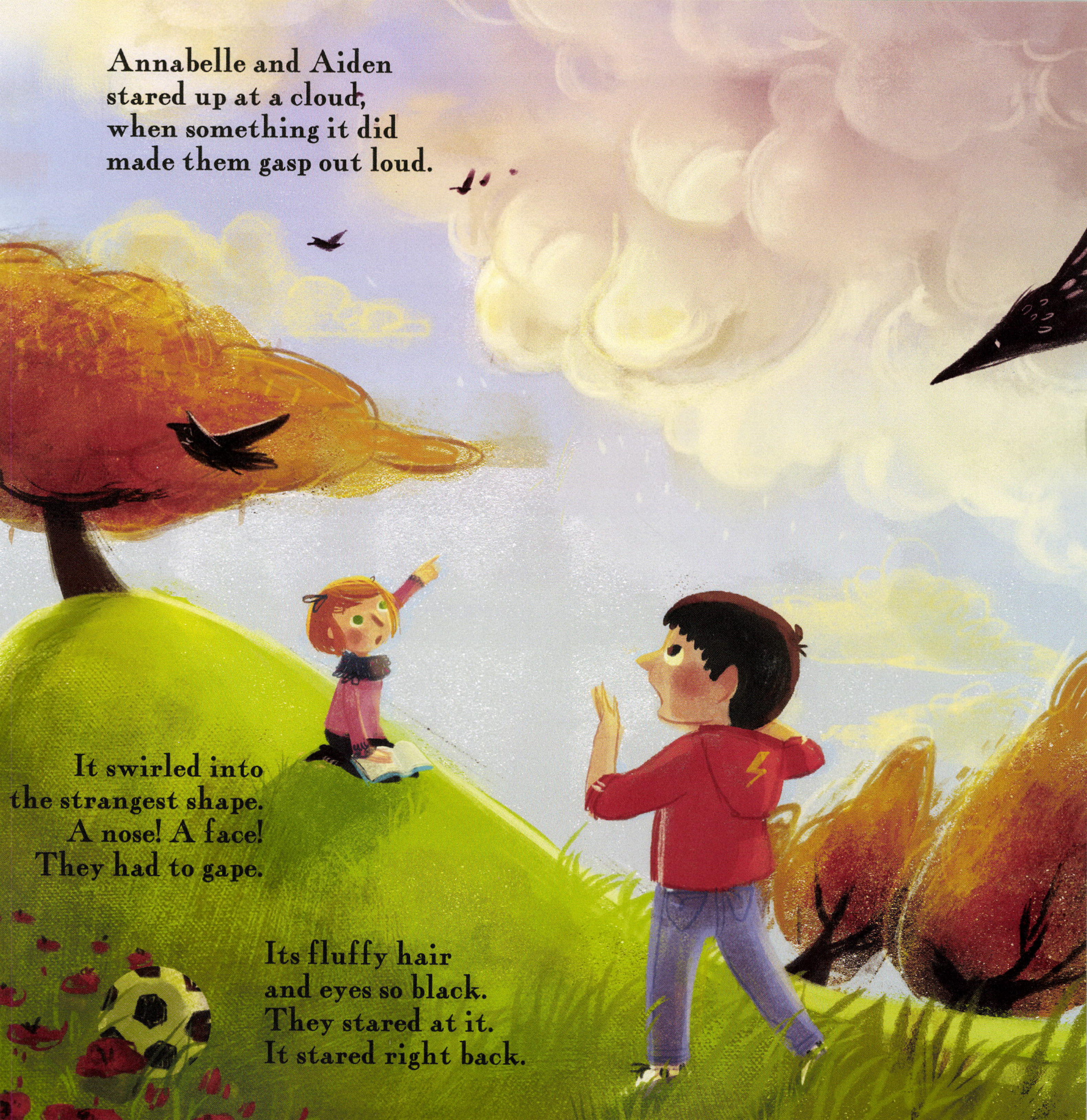
OH, THE THINGS WE BELIEVED!

"An invitation to question and learn."
– LAWRENCE KRAUSS

"Hey nerds, check out this brilliant thing!"
– SCIENCEGASM

J. R. BECKER

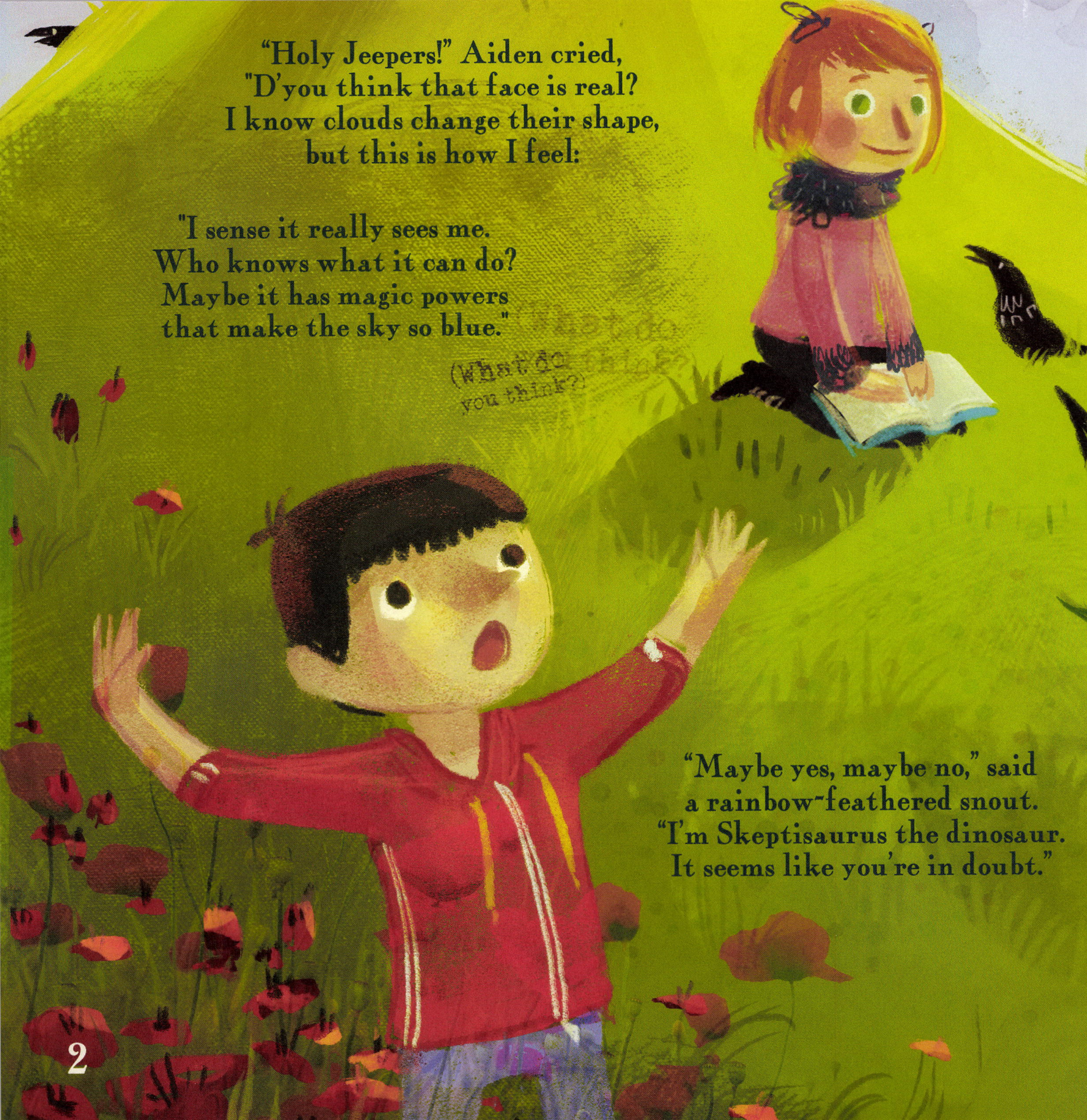
illustrated by Max Rambaldi



Annabelle and Aiden
stared up at a cloud,
when something it did
made them gasp out loud.

It swirled into
the strangest shape.
A nose! A face!
They had to gape.

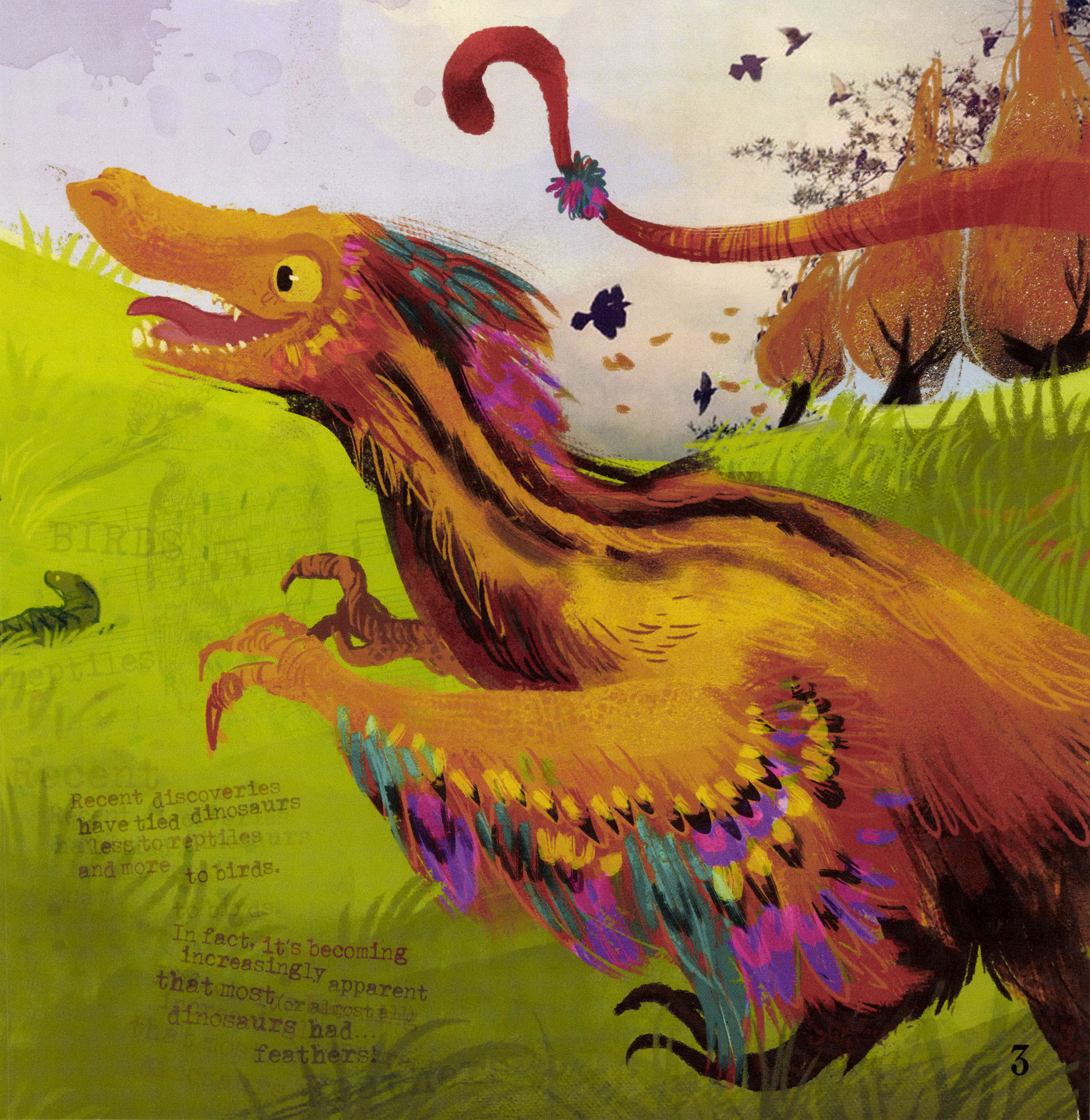
Its fluffy hair
and eyes so black.
They stared at it.
It stared right back.


(What do you think?)

"Holy Jeepers!" Aiden cried,
"D'you think that face is real?
I know clouds change their shape,
but this is how I feel:

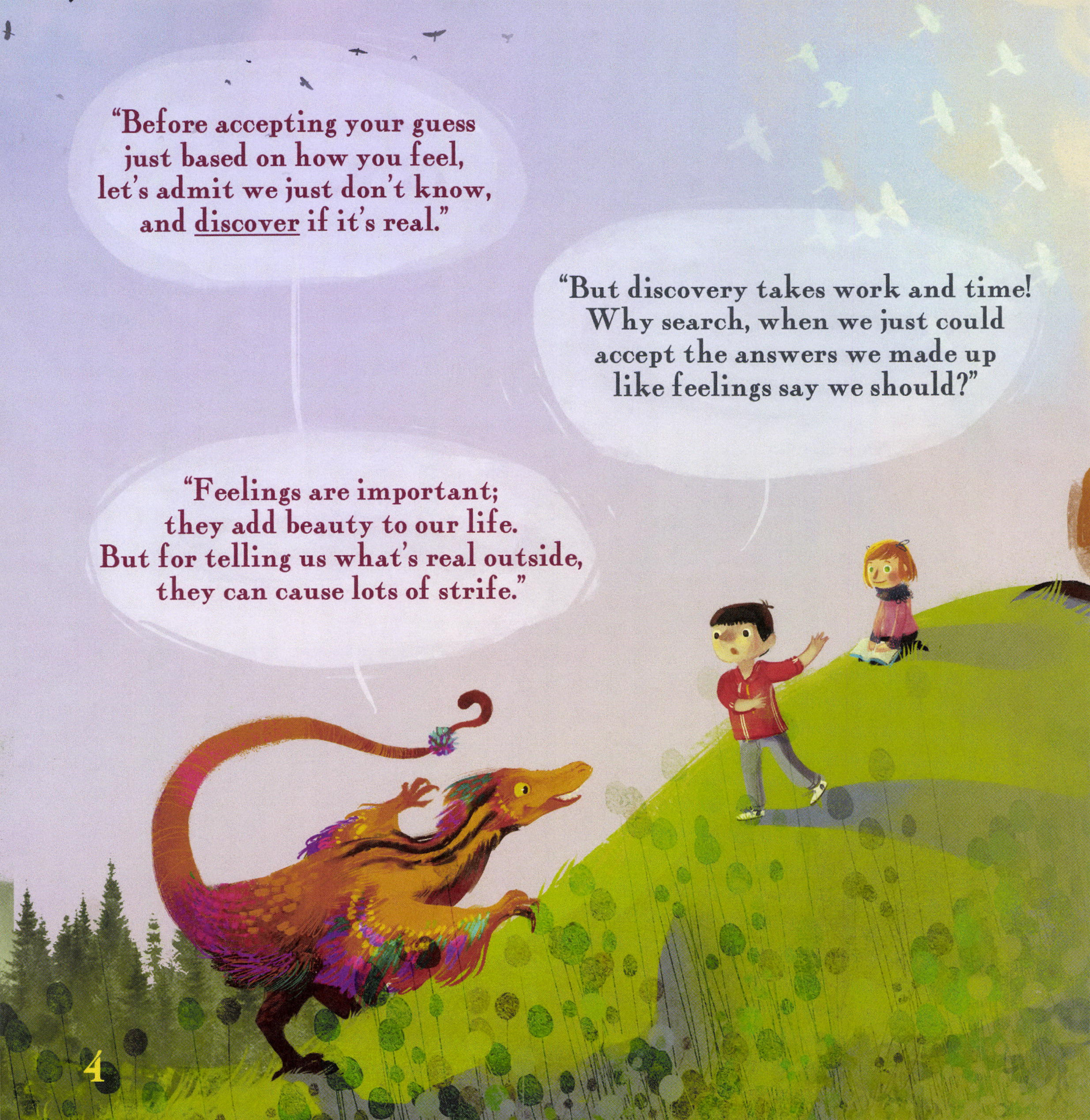
"I sense it really sees me.
Who knows what it can do?
Maybe it has magic powers
that make the sky so blue."

"Maybe yes, maybe no," said
a rainbow-feathered snout.
"I'm Skeptisaurus the dinosaur.
It seems like you're in doubt."



Recent discoveries have tied dinosaurs less to reptiles and more to birds.

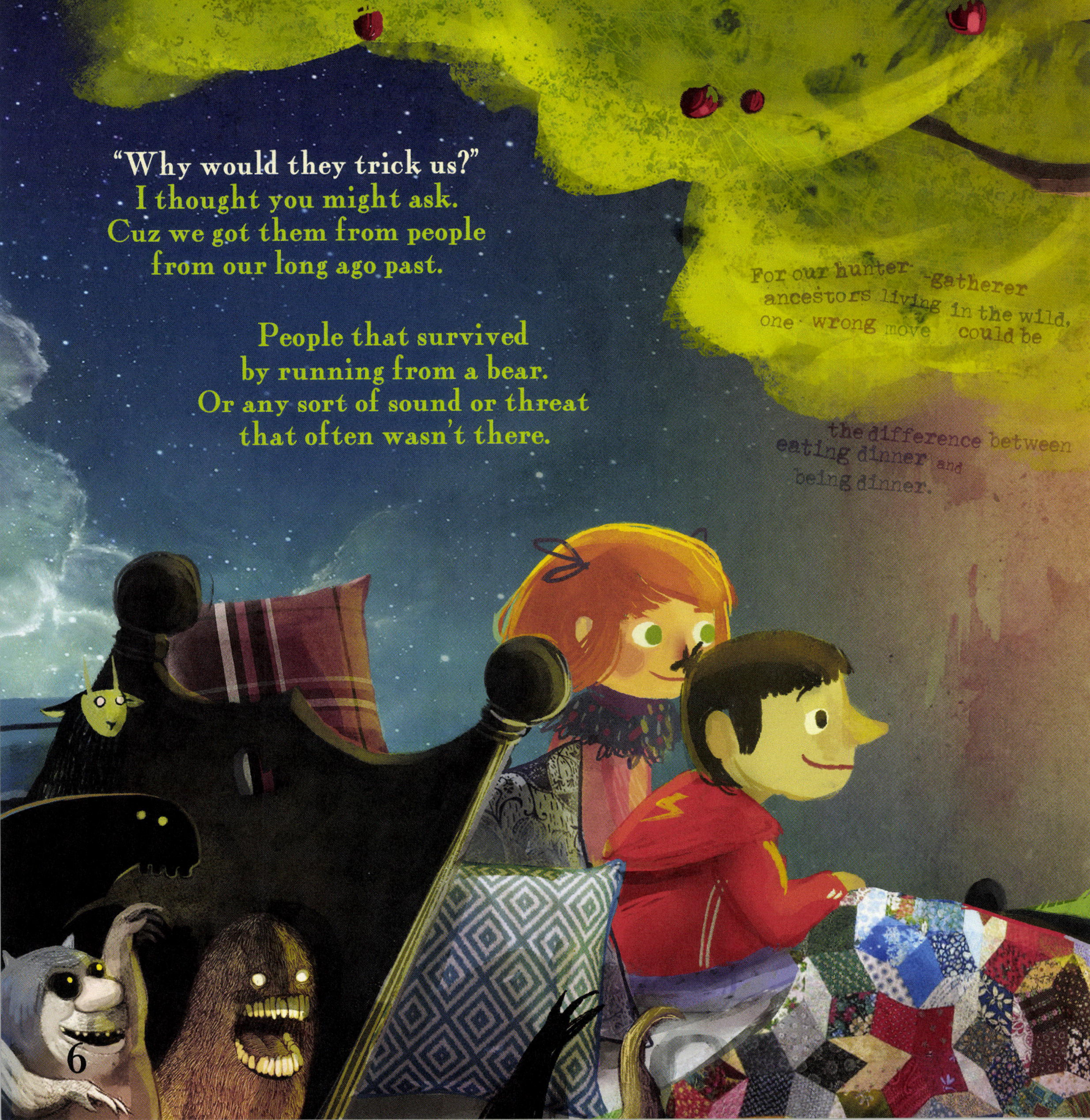
In fact, it's becoming increasingly apparent that most (or almost all) dinosaurs had... feathers!



"Before accepting your guess
just based on how you feel,
let's admit we just don't know,
and discover if it's real."

"But discovery takes work and time!
Why search, when we just could
accept the answers we made up
like feelings say we should?"

"Feelings are important;
they add beauty to our life.
But for telling us what's real outside,
they can cause lots of strife."

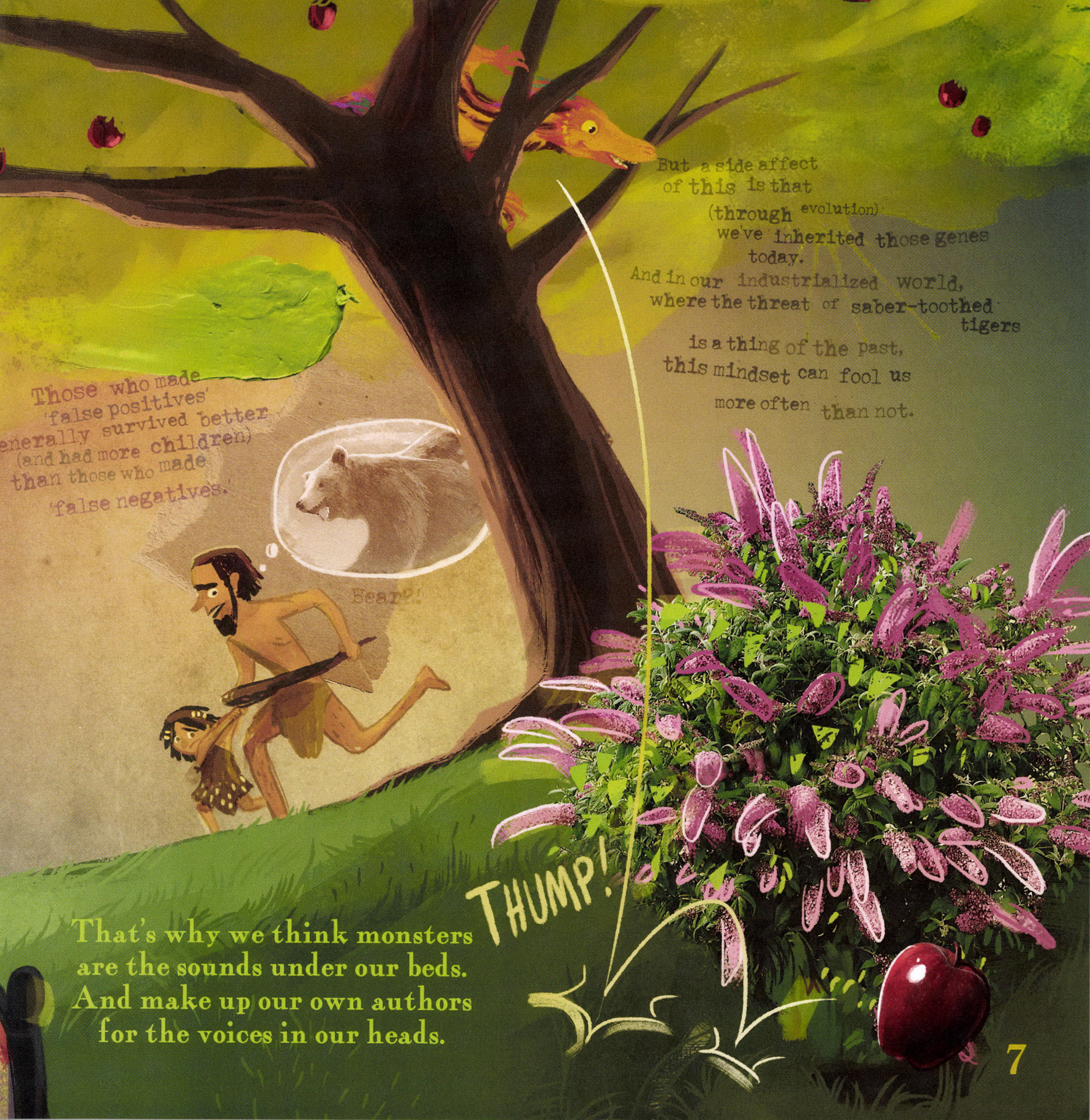


"Why would they trick us?"
I thought you might ask.
Cuz we got them from people
from our long ago past.

People that survived
by running from a bear.
Or any sort of sound or threat
that often wasn't there.

For our hunter-gatherer
ancestors living in the wild,
one wrong move could be

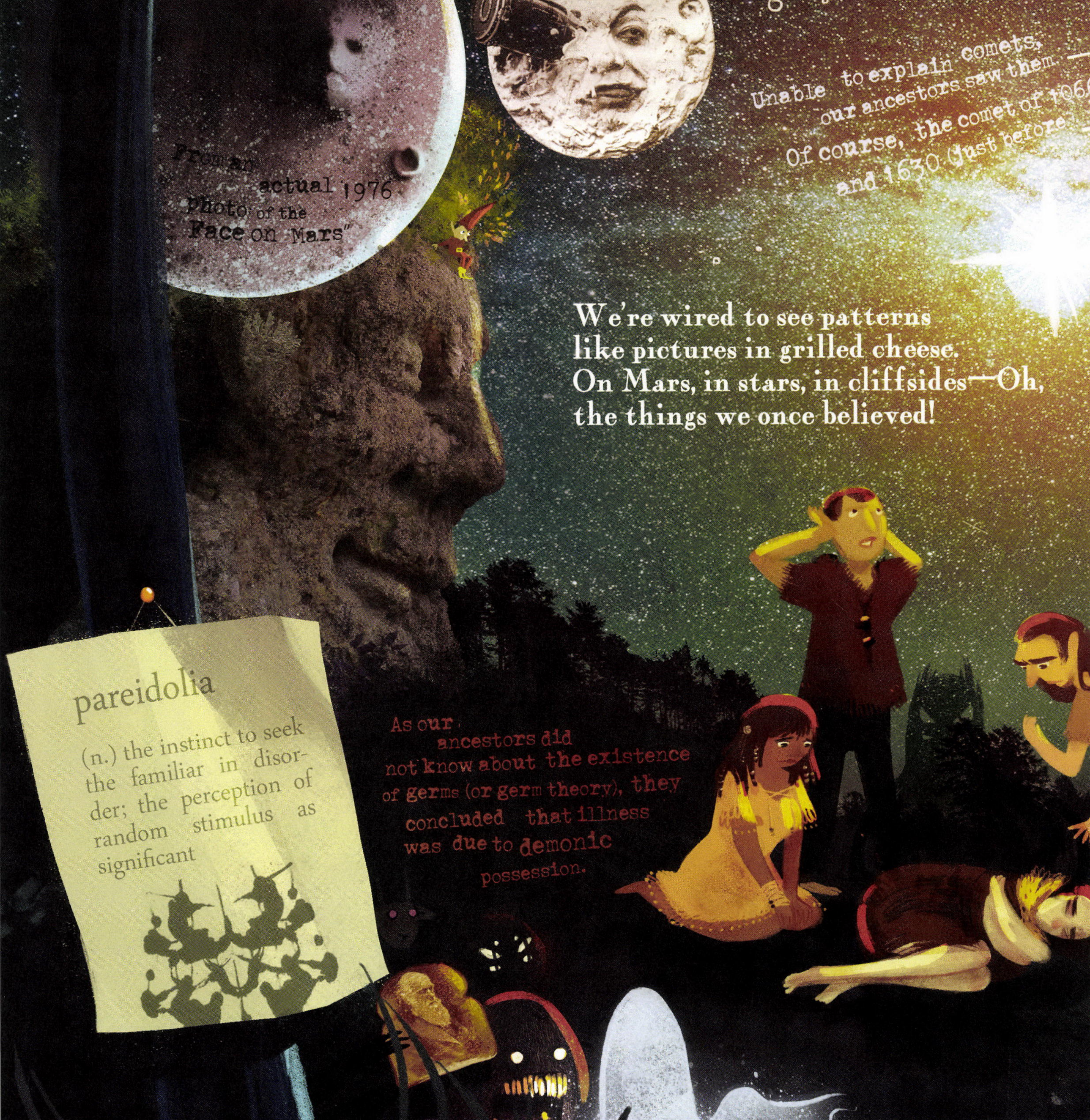
the difference between
eating dinner and
being dinner.



Those who made
'false positives'
enerally survived better
(and had more children)
than those who made
'false negatives.'

But a side affect
of this is that
(through evolution)
we've inherited those genes
today.
And in our industrialized world,
where the threat of saber-toothed
tigers
is a thing of the past,
this mindset can fool us
more often than not.

That's why we think monsters
are the sounds under our beds.
And make up our own authors
for the voices in our heads.



From an actual 1976 photo of the "Face on Mars"

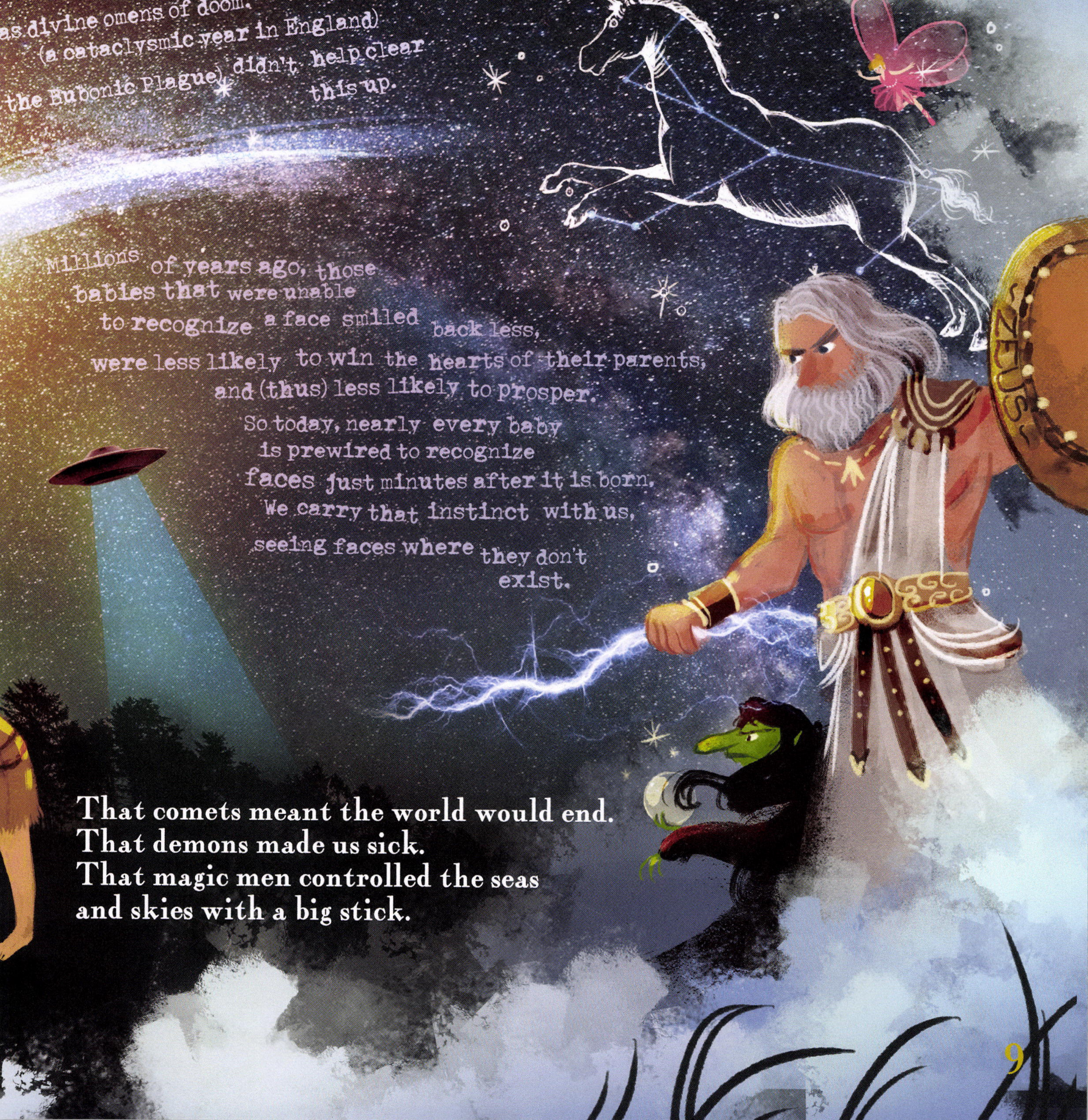
Unable to explain comets,
our ancestors saw them. —
Of course, the comet of 106
and 1630 (just before

We're wired to see patterns
like pictures in grilled cheese.
On Mars, in stars, in cliffsides—Oh,
the things we once believed!

pareidolia

(n.) the instinct to seek the familiar in disorder; the perception of random stimulus as significant

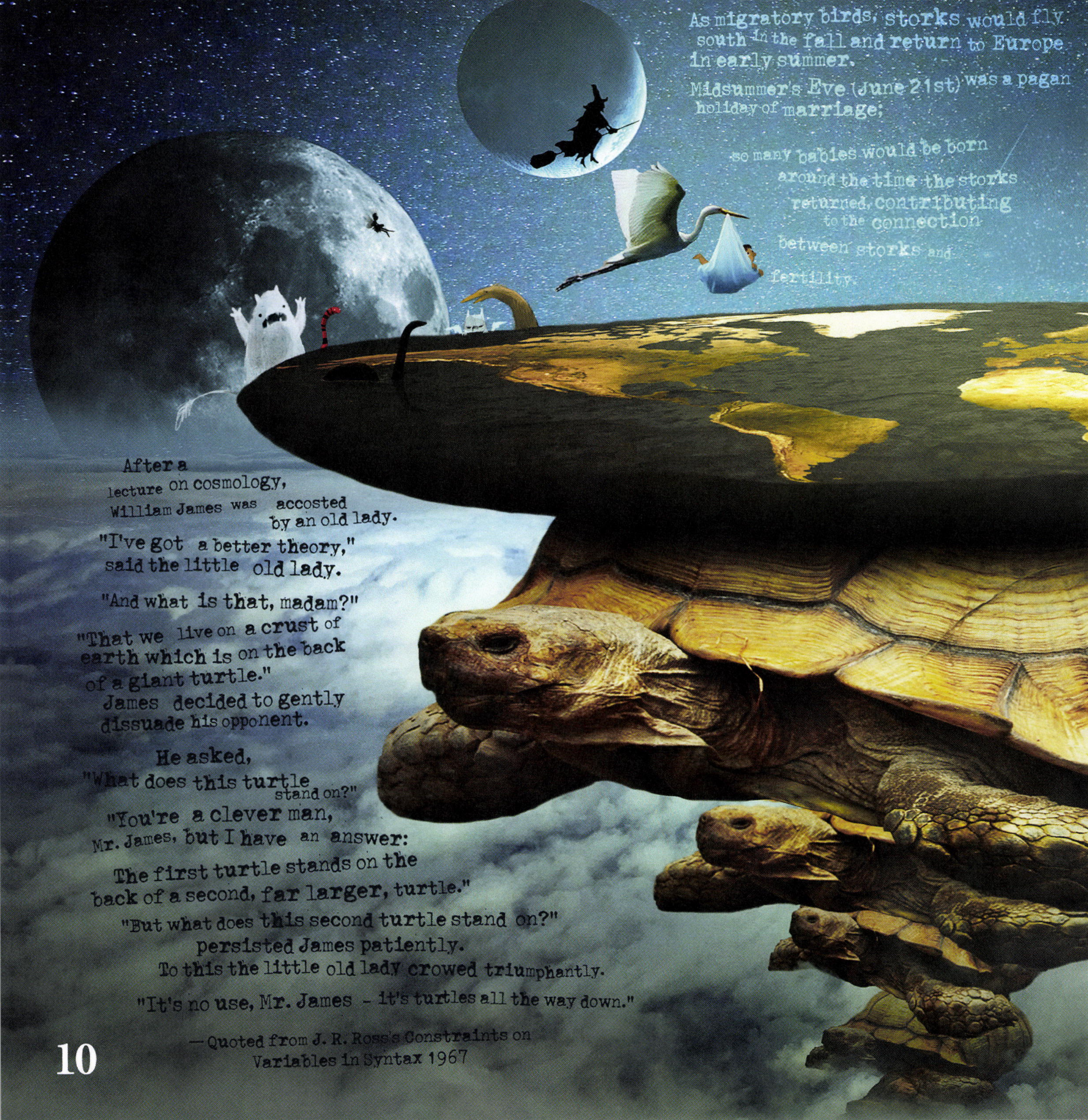
As our ancestors did not know about the existence of germs (or germ theory), they concluded that illness was due to demonic possession.



as divine omens of doom.
(a cataclysmic year in England)
the Bubonic Plague) didn't help clear
this up.

Millions of years ago, those babies that were unable to recognize a face smiled back less, were less likely to win the hearts of their parents, and (thus) less likely to prosper. So today, nearly every baby is prewired to recognize faces just minutes after it is born. We carry that instinct with us, seeing faces where they don't exist.

That comets meant the world would end.
That demons made us sick.
That magic men controlled the seas
and skies with a big stick.



As migratory birds, storks would fly south in the fall and return to Europe in early summer.

Midsummer's Eve (June 21st) was a pagan holiday of marriage;

so many babies would be born around the time the storks returned, contributing to the connection between storks and fertility.

After a lecture on cosmology, William James was accosted by an old lady.

"I've got a better theory," said the little old lady.

"And what is that, madam?"

"That we live on a crust of earth which is on the back of a giant turtle."

James decided to gently dissuade his opponent.

He asked, "What does this turtle stand on?"

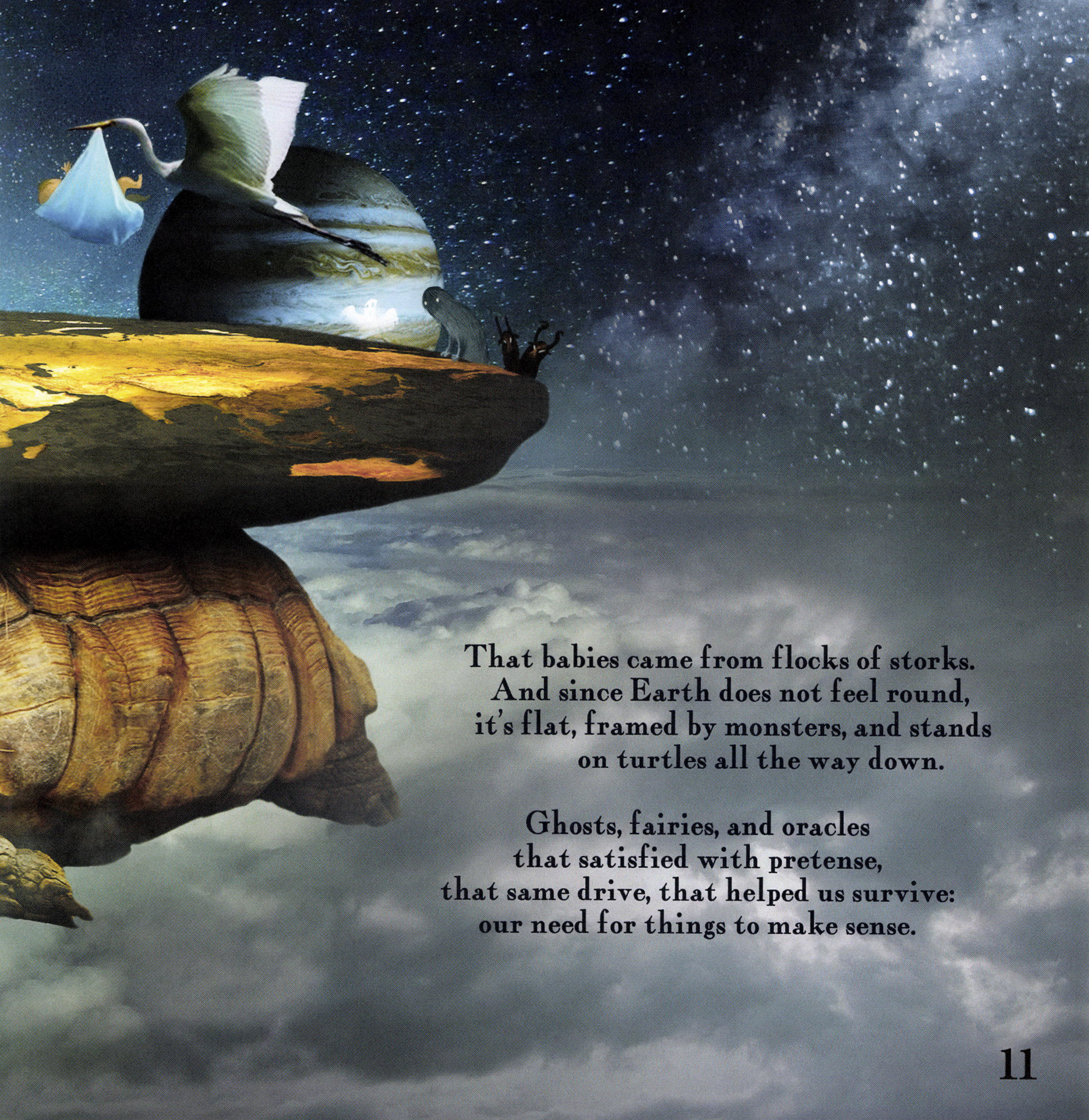
"You're a clever man, Mr. James, but I have an answer: The first turtle stands on the back of a second, far larger, turtle."

"But what does this second turtle stand on?" persisted James patiently.

To this the little old lady crowed triumphantly.

"It's no use, Mr. James - it's turtles all the way down."

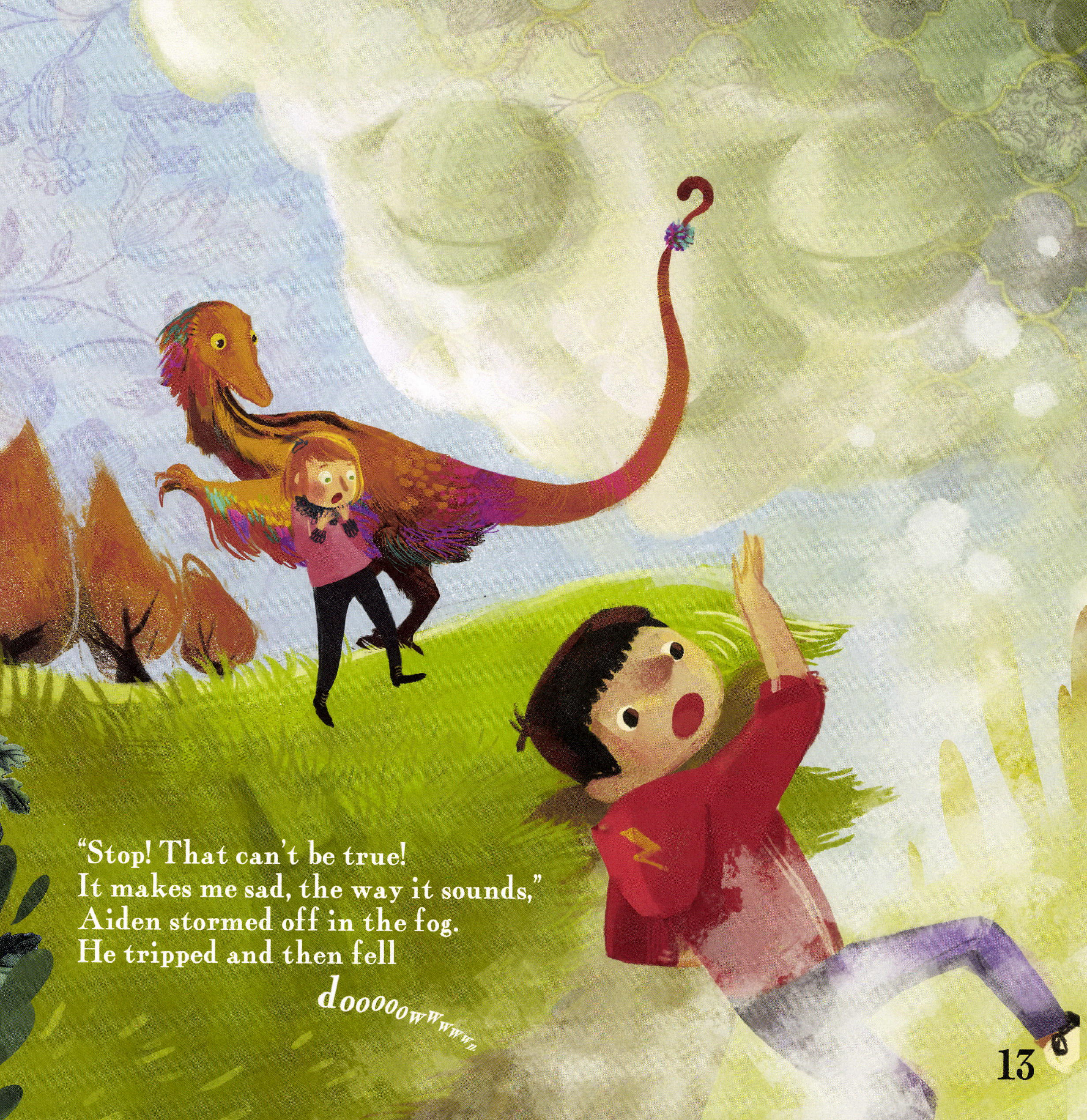
— Quoted from J. R. Ross's Constraints on Variables in Syntax 1967



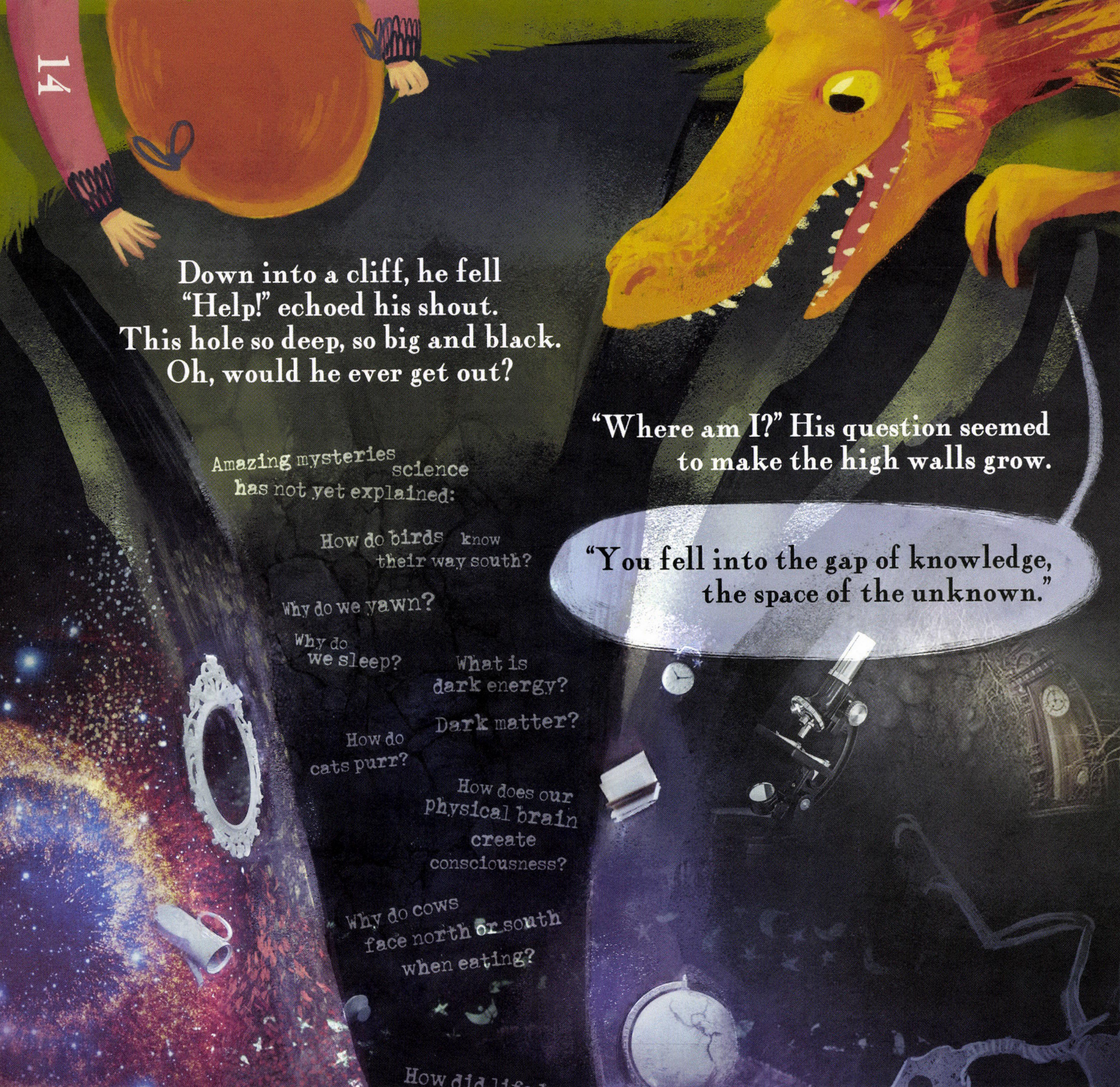
That babies came from flocks of storks.
And since Earth does not feel round,
it's flat, framed by monsters, and stands
on turtles all the way down.

Ghosts, fairies, and oracles
that satisfied with pretense,
that same drive, that helped us survive:
our need for things to make sense.

But throughout human history,
for each answer ever won,
the amount that turned out to be magic?
Well, so far that's been none.



"Stop! That can't be true!
It makes me sad, the way it sounds,"
Aiden stormed off in the fog.
He tripped and then fell
dooooowwwwwn

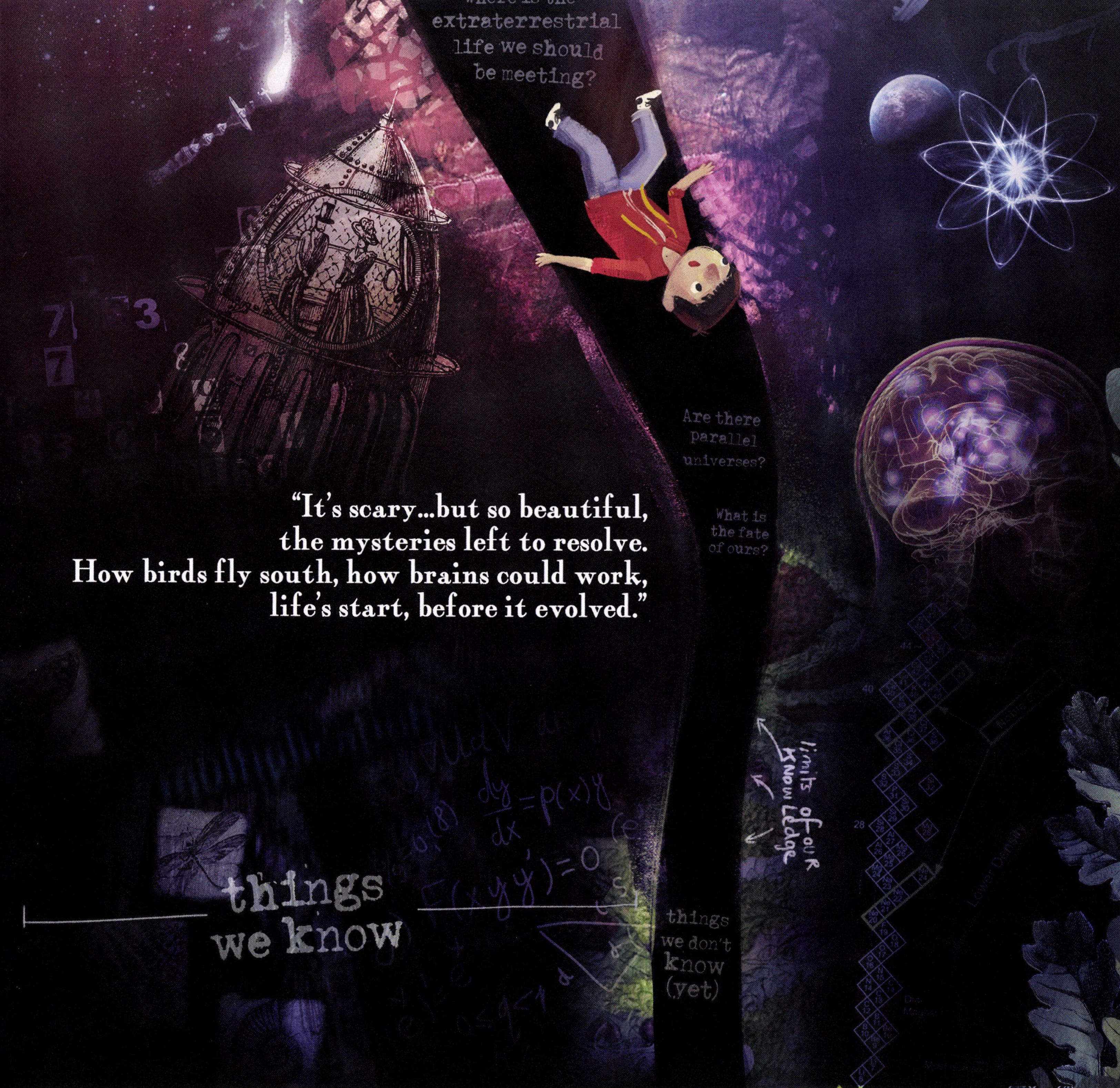


Down into a cliff, he fell
"Help!" echoed his shout.
This hole so deep, so big and black.
Oh, would he ever get out?

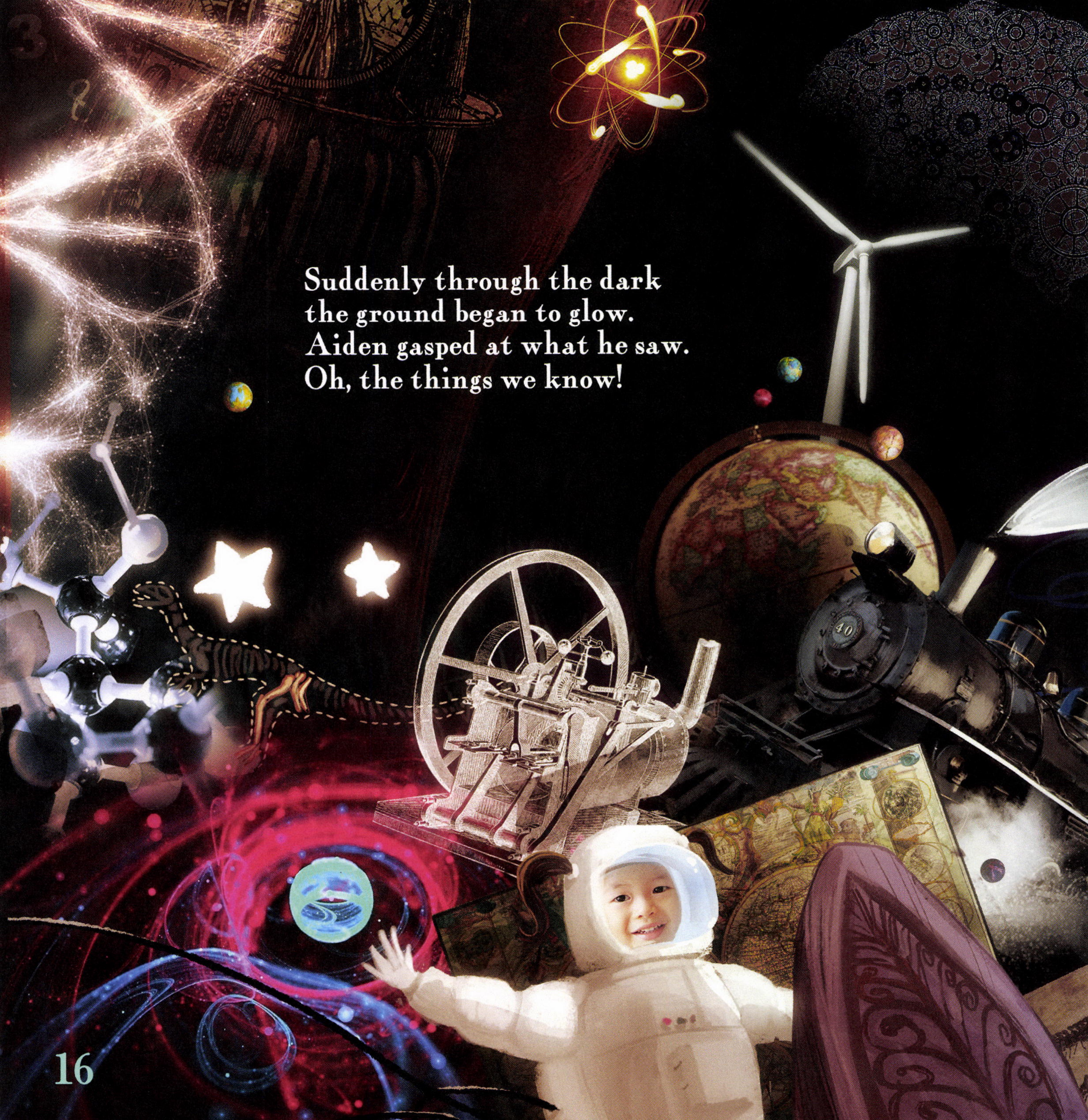
"Where am I?" His question seemed
to make the high walls grow.

"You fell into the gap of knowledge,
the space of the unknown."

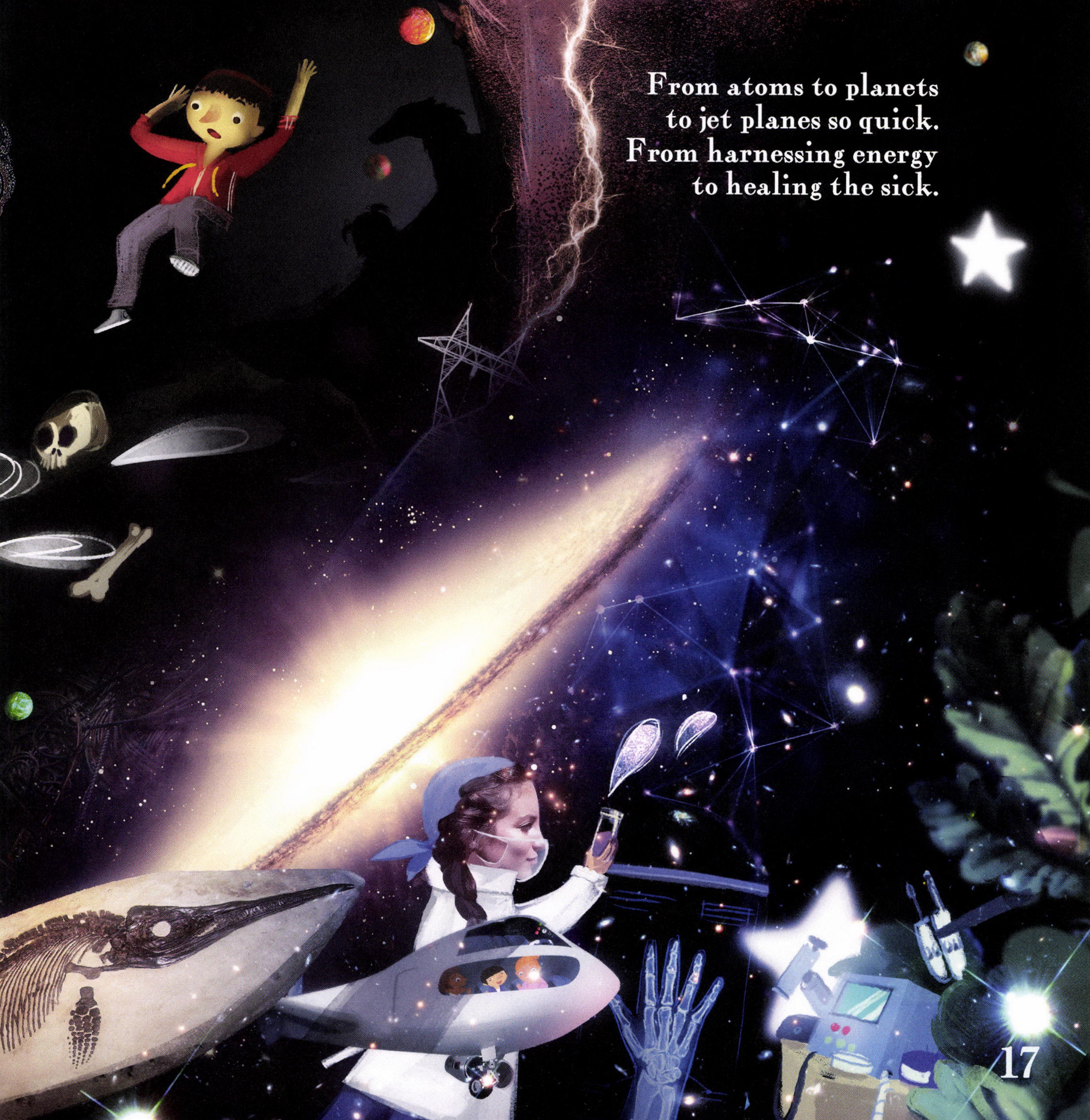
Amazing mysteries science has not yet explained:
How do birds know their way south?
Why do we yawn?
Why do we sleep?
What is dark energy?
Dark matter?
How do cats purr?
How does our physical brain create consciousness?
Why do cows face north or south when eating?
How did li


extraterrestrial
life we should
be meeting?
Are there
parallel
universes?
What is
the fate
of ours?
limits of our
knowledge
things
we know
things
we don't
know
(yet)
$\frac{dy}{dx} = p(x)y$
$F(x, y, y') = 0$

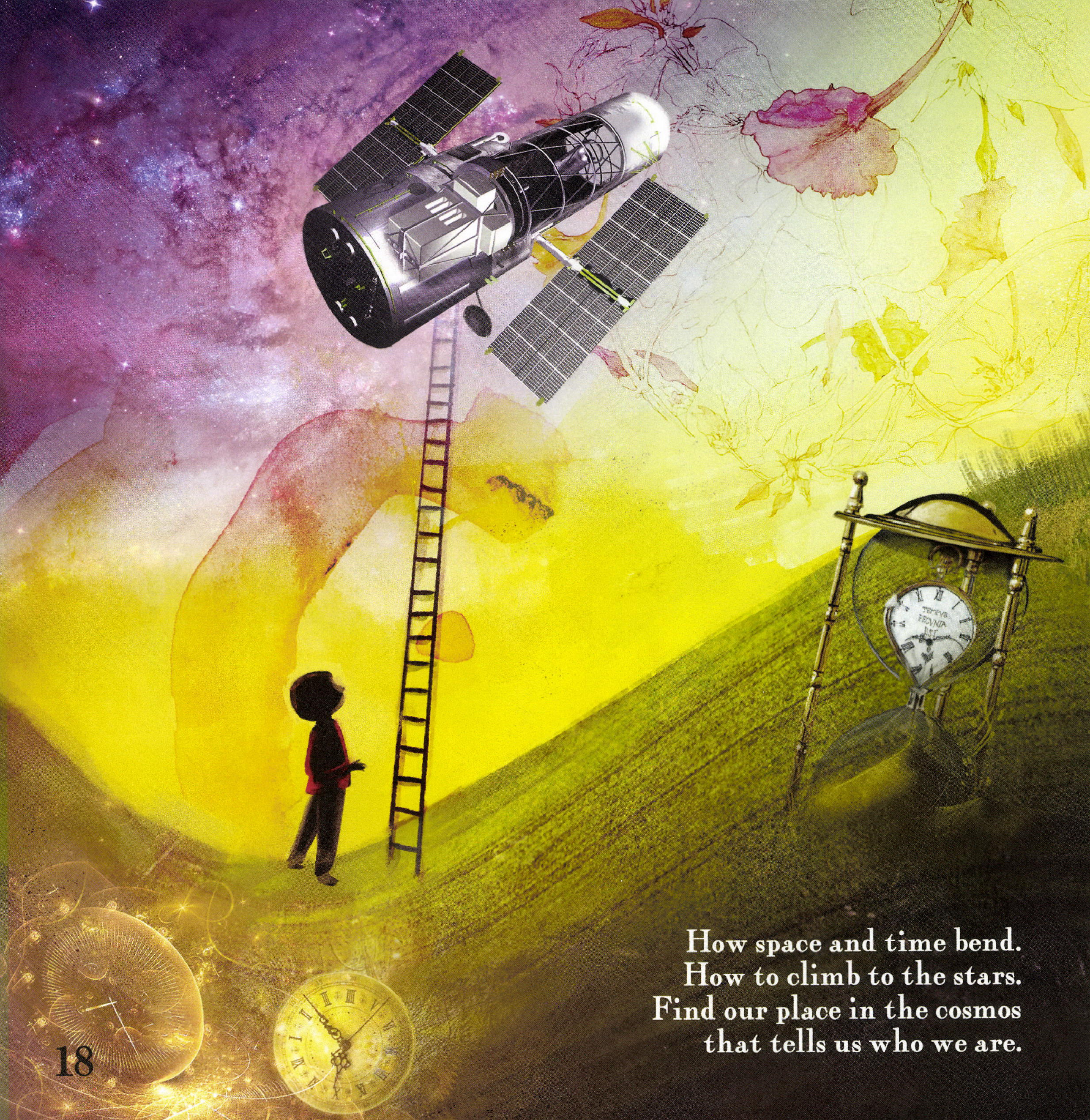
"It's scary...but so beautiful,
the mysteries left to resolve.
How birds fly south, how brains could work,
life's start, before it evolved."



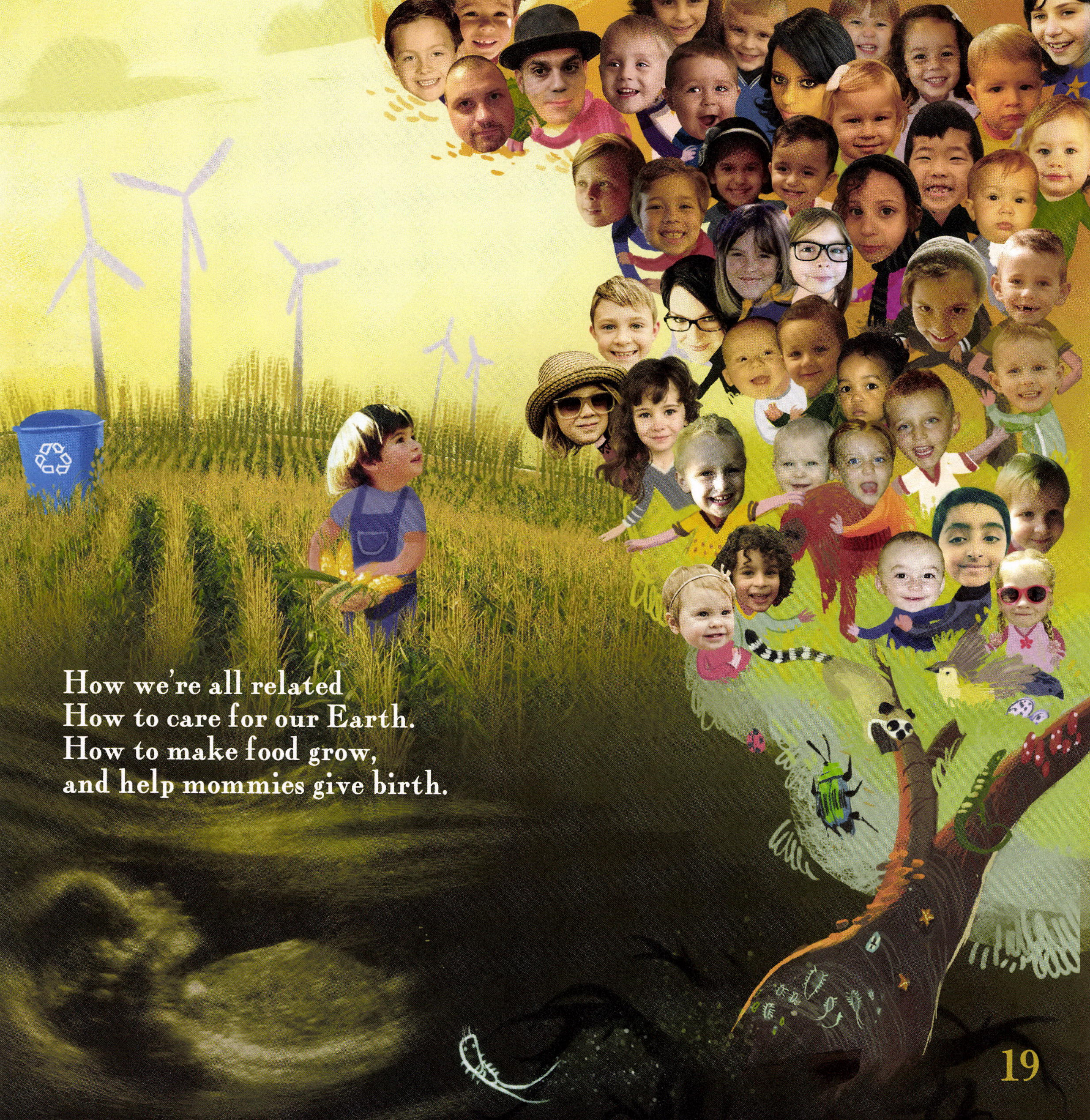
Suddenly through the dark
the ground began to glow.
Aiden gasped at what he saw.
Oh, the things we know!



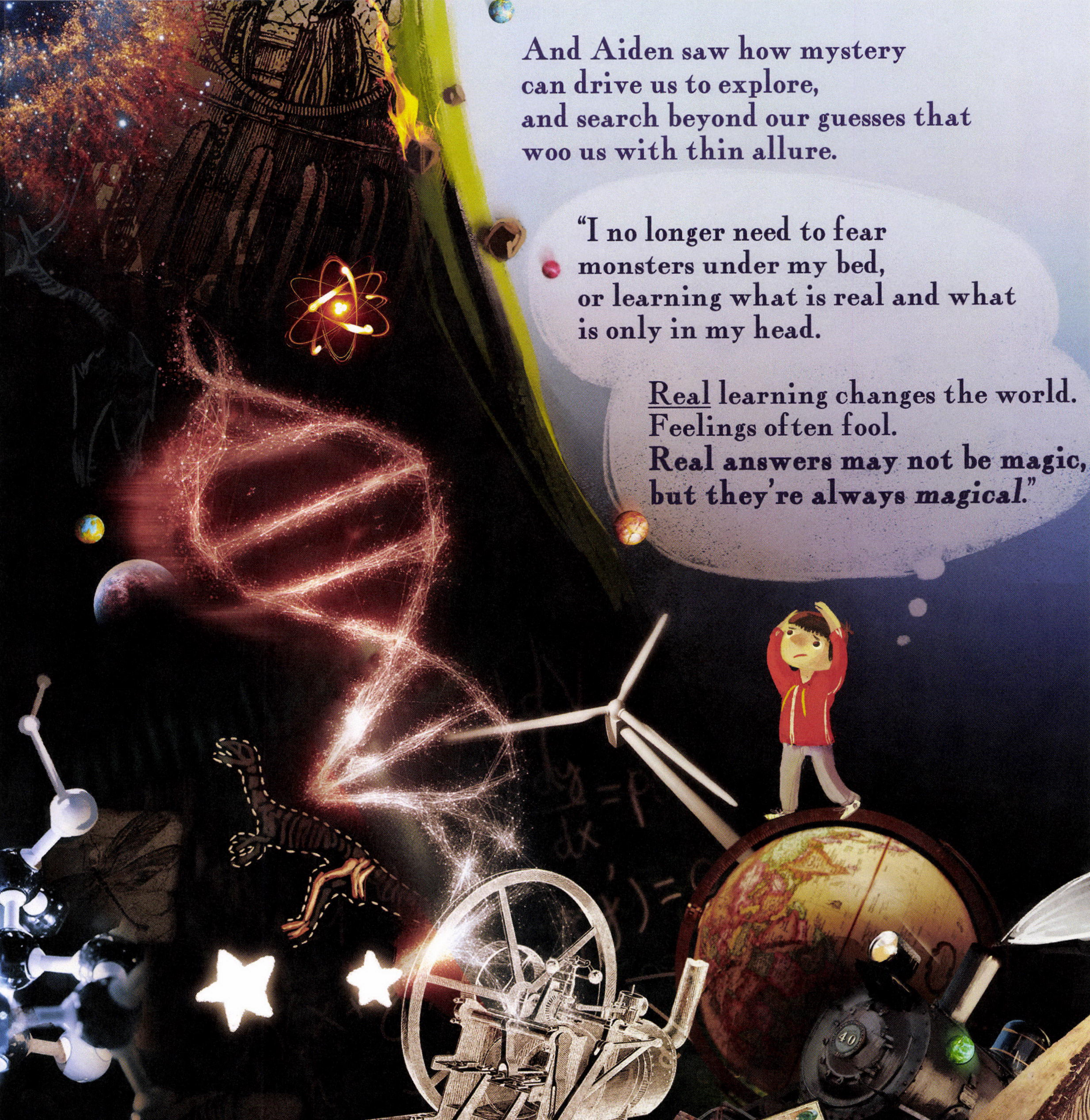
From atoms to planets
to jet planes so quick.
From harnessing energy
to healing the sick.


TEMPVS
PECVNIA
EST

How space and time bend.
How to climb to the stars.
Find our place in the cosmos
that tells us who we are.



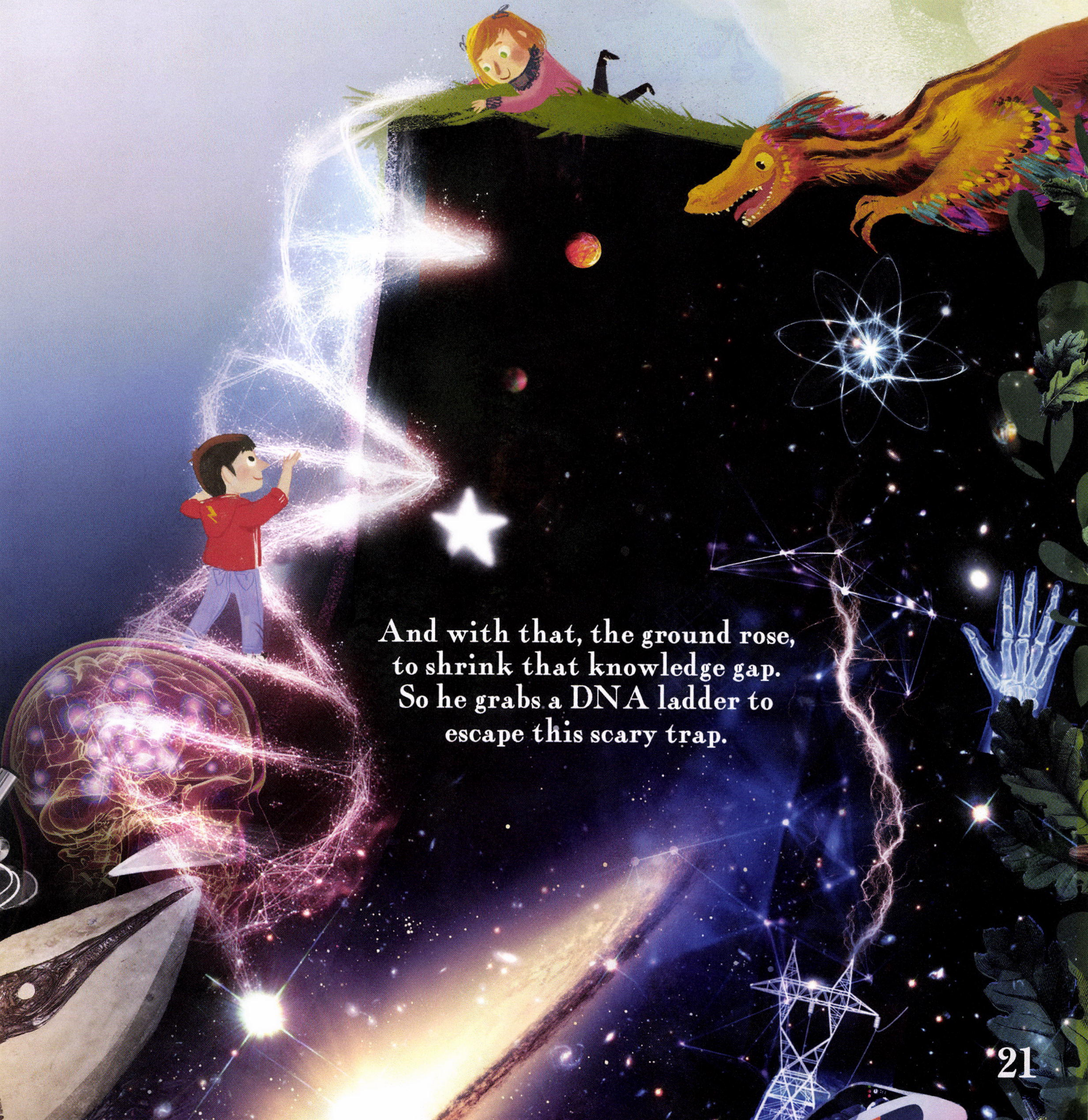
How we're all related
How to care for our Earth.
How to make food grow,
and help mommies give birth.



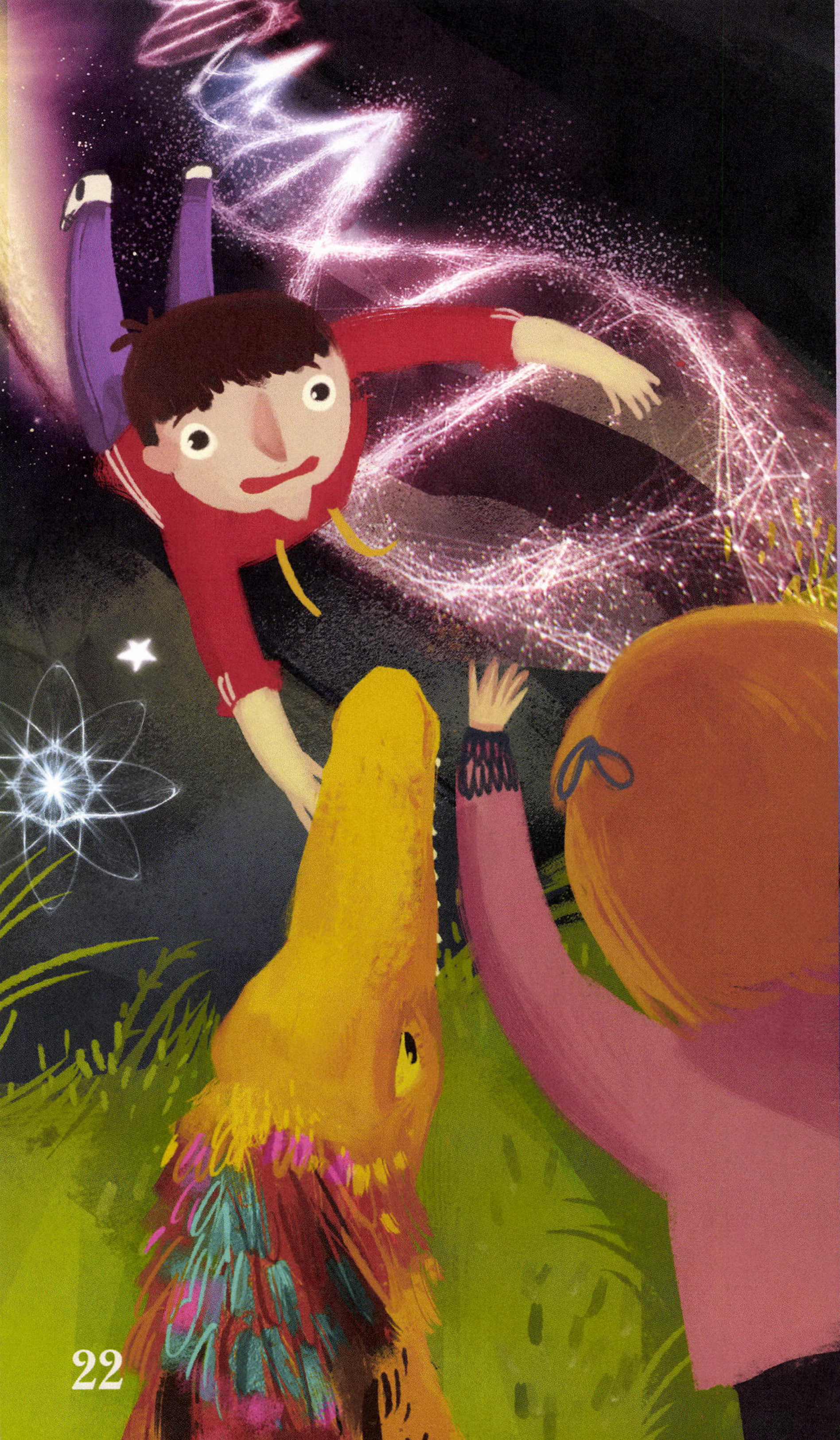
And Aiden saw how mystery
can drive us to explore,
and search beyond our guesses that
woo us with thin allure.

"I no longer need to fear
monsters under my bed,
or learning what is real and what
is only in my head.

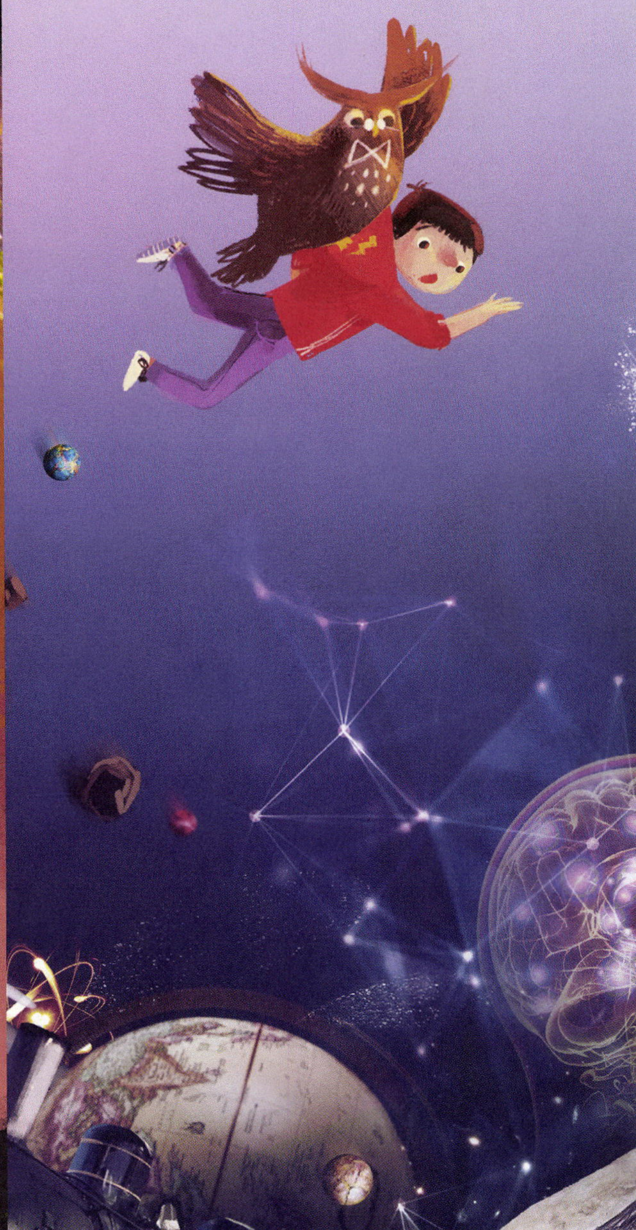
Real learning changes the world.
Feelings often fool.
Real answers may not be magic,
but they're always *magical*."

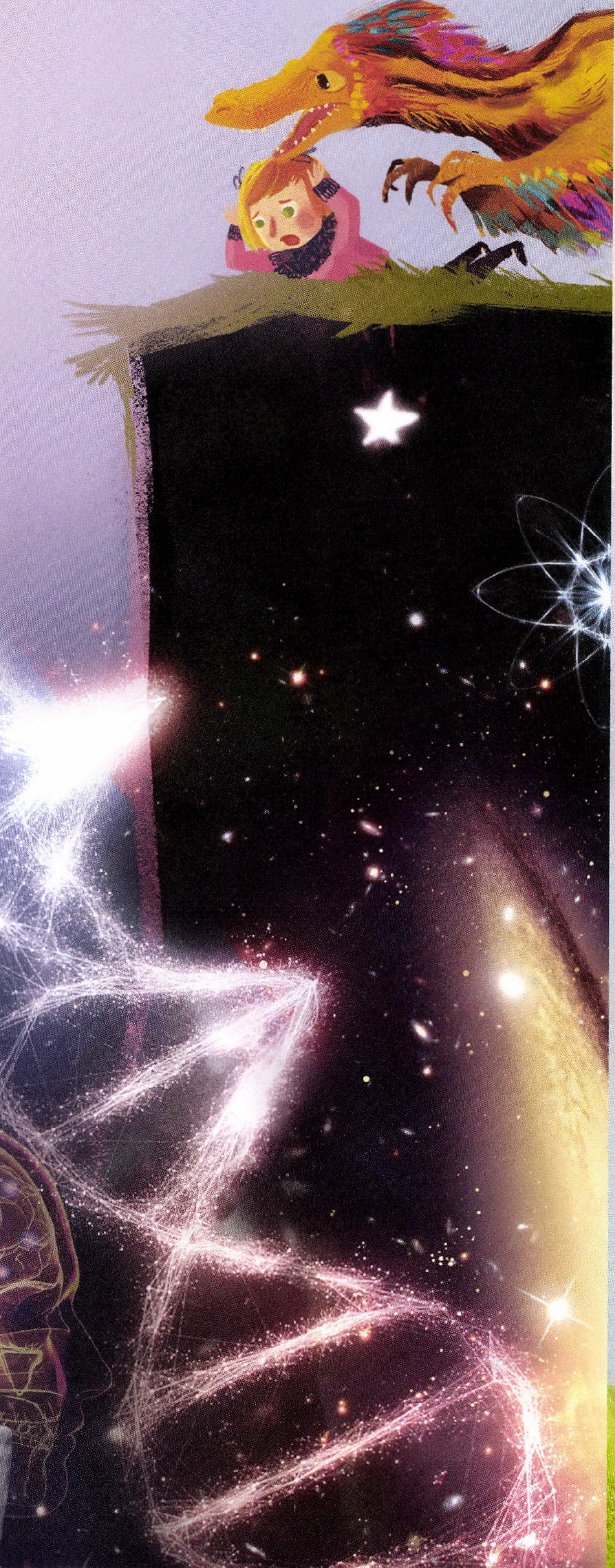


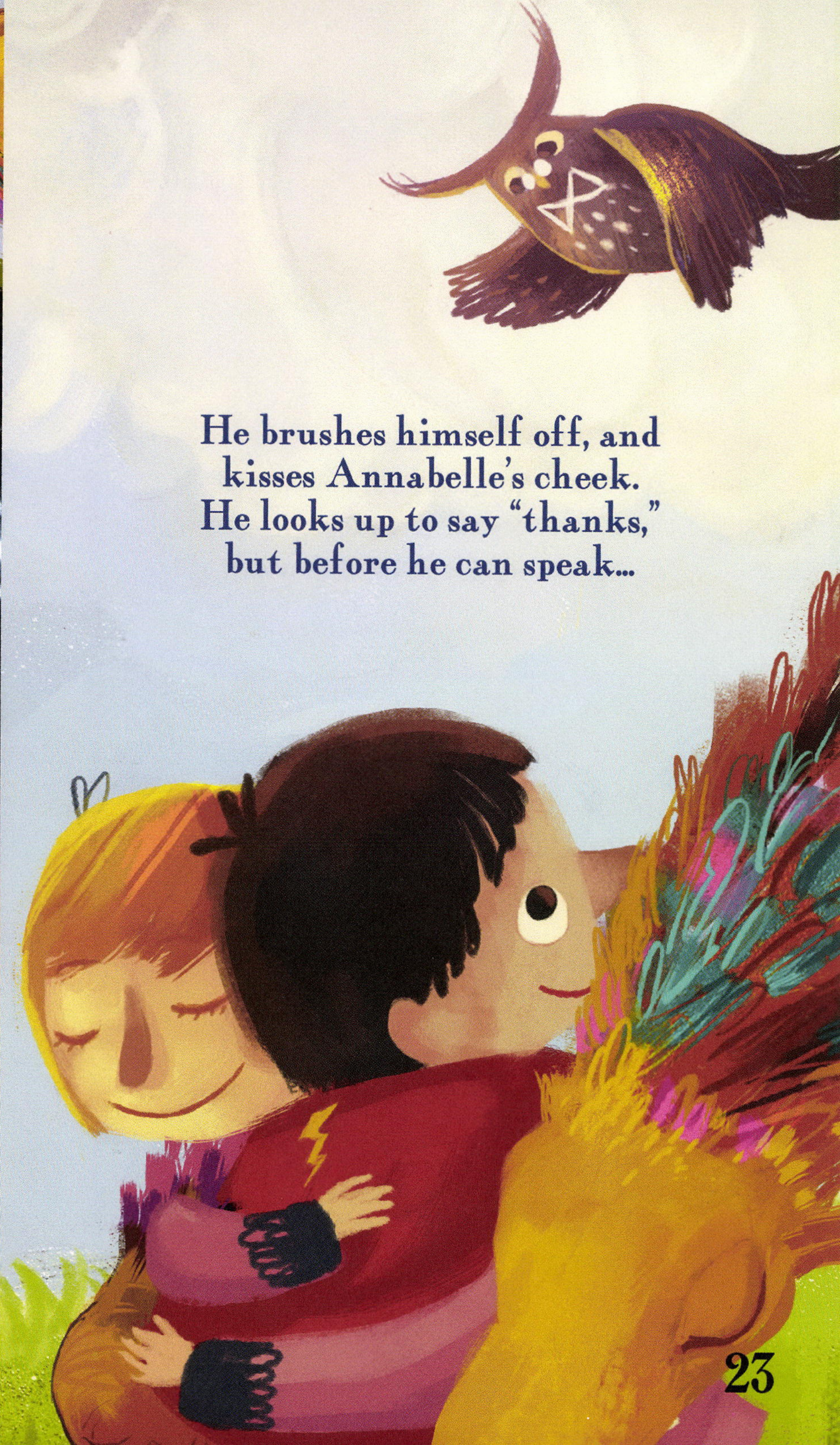
And with that, the ground rose,
to shrink that knowledge gap.
So he grabs a DNA ladder to
escape this scary trap.



He climbs and he jumps,
but starts falling back down!
But the wise owl comes,
and flies him to safe ground.

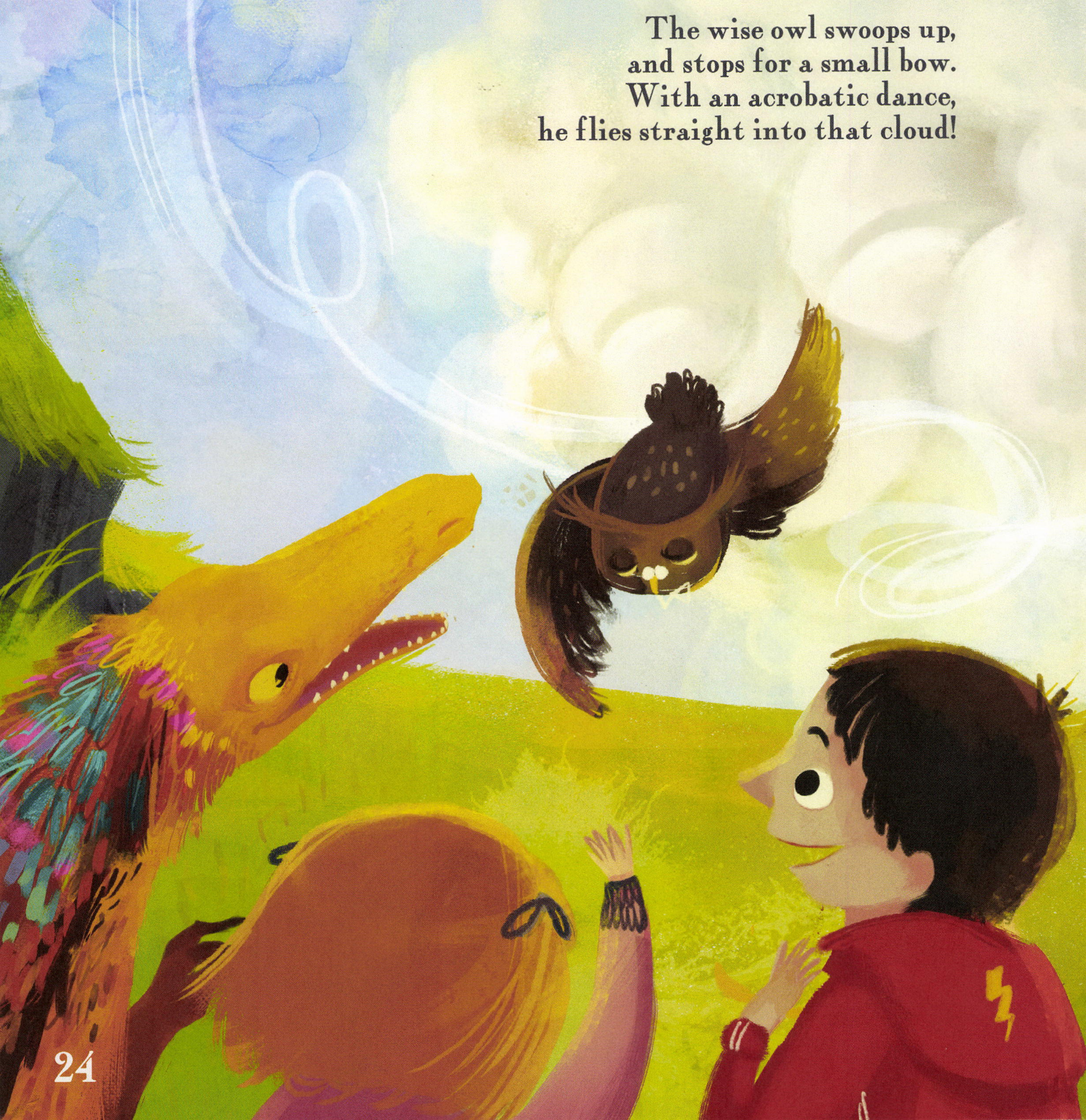


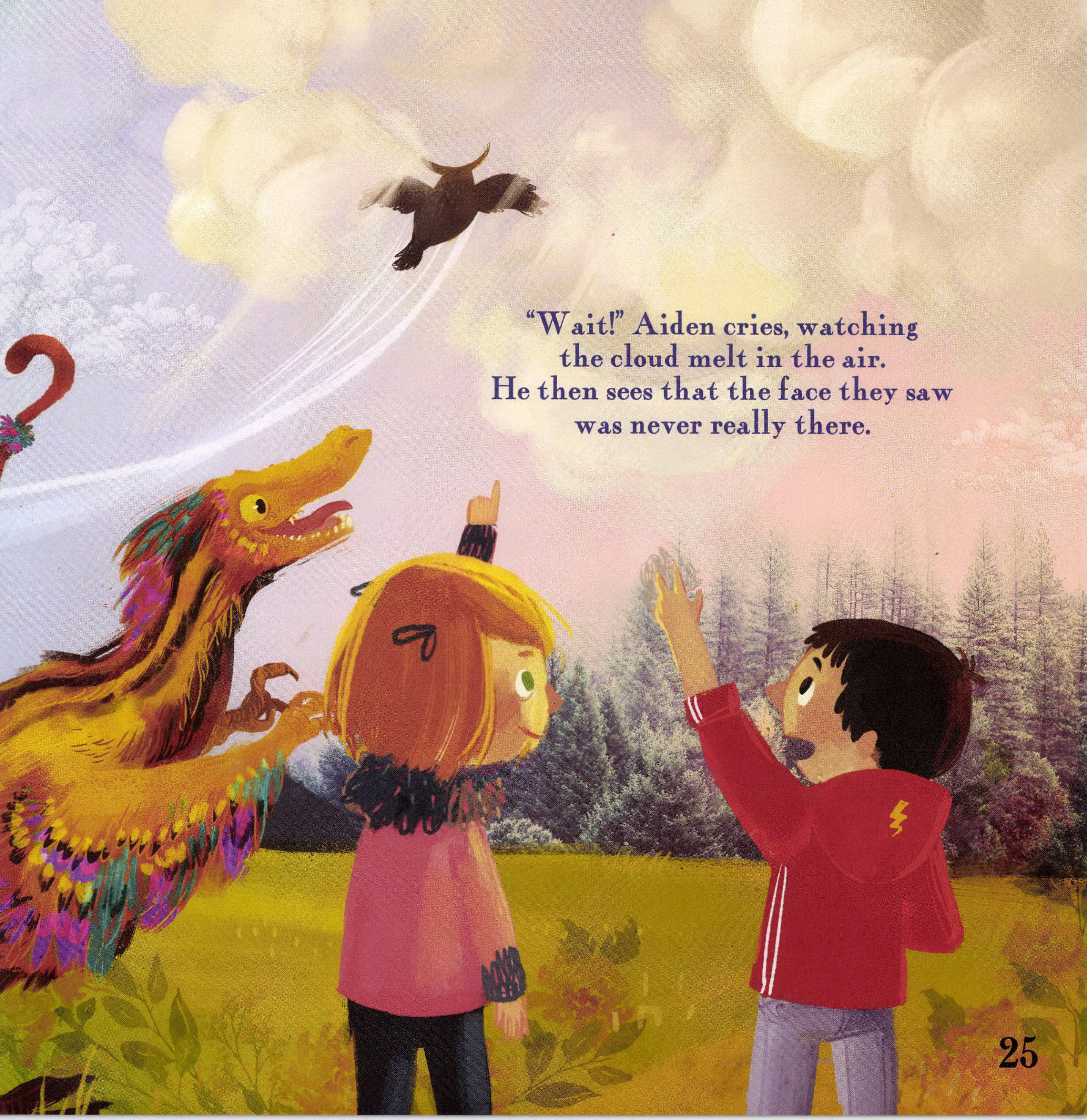




He brushes himself off, and
kisses Annabelle's cheek.
He looks up to say "thanks,"
but before he can speak...

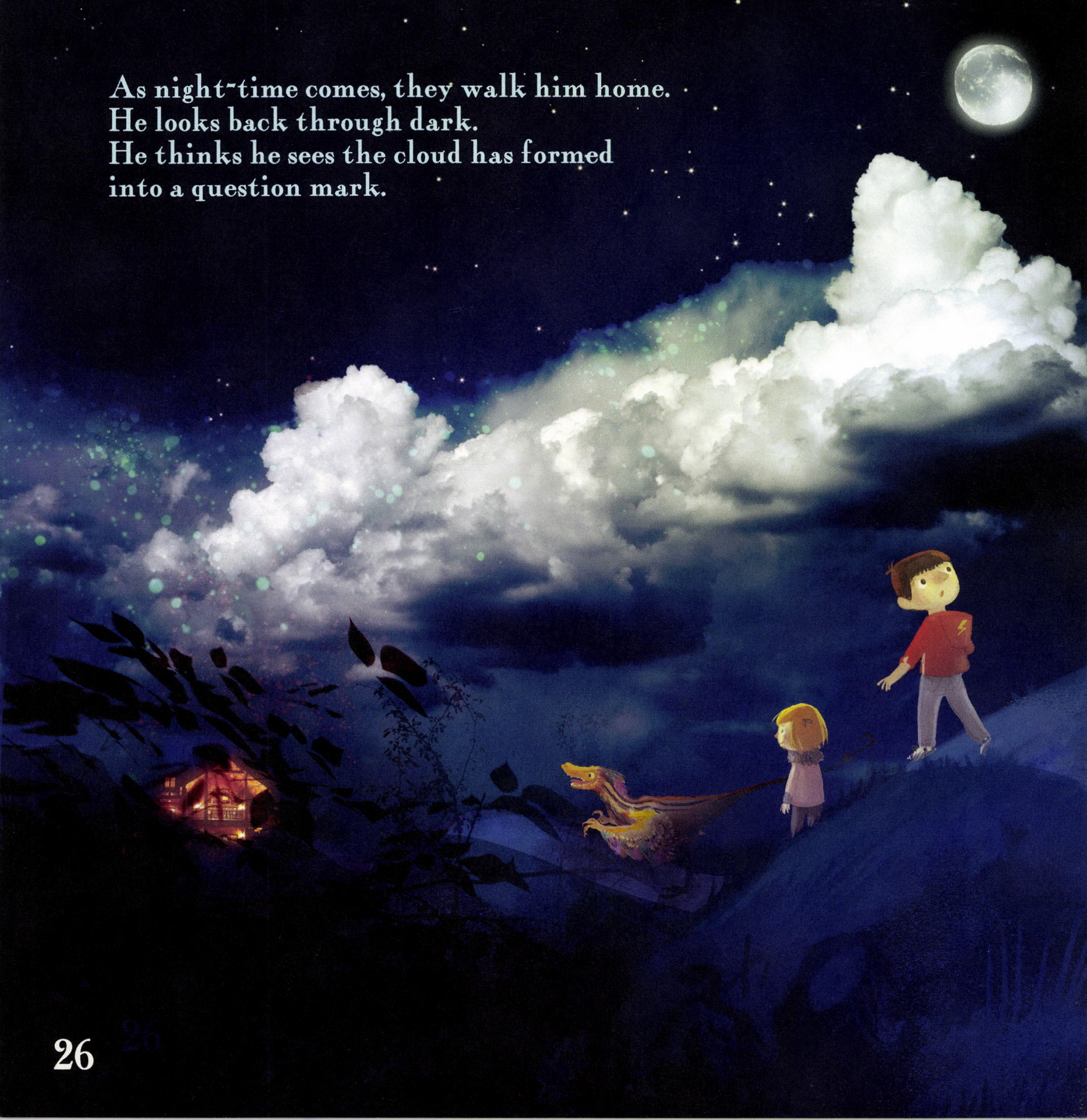
The wise owl swoops up,
and stops for a small bow.
With an acrobatic dance,
he flies straight into that cloud!





“Wait!” Aiden cries, watching
the cloud melt in the air.
He then sees that the face they saw
was never really there.

As night-time comes, they walk him home.
He looks back through dark.
He thinks he sees the cloud has formed
into a question mark.



SPECIAL THANK YOU TO JENNIFER WOMACK, MATTHEW KEY, KIERAN MZ WOOD, MADDI JONES, LILY PELL, NA'AMAH AND ELLAH ROSENZWEIG, STEPHANIE DAVIS, IRA GEWANTER,
TON THOMAS BUNN, JENNIFER AND BEN ERDIN, RYDEN FIELD, DELIA EVANS ETTERE, DAVE FITZPATRICK, CIARA BROWN, ERIC ISFELD, ELAINE M. CASSELL, DYLAN TROY,
GUS MORGAN, ZOEY LYNN GONZALEZ, YIQIAO FLORA SHI, KAI BILODEAU, LOCHLAN CONARD, ESTHER RAIN PHARO, ASHLEY RISICA, RUPERT HENDY, HENSON LEE,
JOVI HAYNES, AARON, FEEB, ISAAC ELLIOT AMELIE LEWIS,
ELEANOR AINSLEY CHATFIELD, ARIANA MARIA FRANCISKA BLITGER, EVERETT RIEL, ELLE PETRE.
ALEX PO JU LAI, HSIU-HUI HUANG, KARA BROWNE, JACI SZCZEPANSKI, JOHN LOMBARDO, RONALD TREUR, LANDEN MAYENFELS.
RANDI READER, MICHAEL SHIEVITZ, LOGAN TROSKI, BRIAN LANDO,
EDDIE KALAHER, MAHDI ALFARDAN, LUIGI VANDI, KERWIN, WM. COLEY, AMANDA EMERSON,
CHAPA FAMILY, CHRIS BRAEGGER, JONATHAN BROWN, JAY PIPHO, DAN BAVER, NATHAN ERICKSON, JESSIE BECKER.

"Tiger got to hunt, bird got to fly;
Man got to sit and wonder, "Why, why, why?
Tiger got to sleep, bird got to land;
Man got to tell himself he understand."

--Kurt Vonnegut

Copyright © 2016 by **Joseph Raphael Becker**. All rights reserved.

First Edition. ISBN: 978-0-9978066-2-5

Published in the United States by Imaginarium Press, LLC
ANNABELLE & AIDEN is a trademark of Imaginarium Press, LLC.
Imaginarium Press, LLC supports the First Amendment and celebrates the right to read.

'Like' us on Facebook.com/AnnabelleAndAiden • www.AnnabelleAndAiden.com

CPSIA information can be obtained at www.ICGtesting.com
Printed in the USA
LVIW01n2131200717
542090LV00002B/6

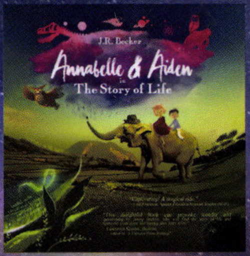
9780997806625

Annabelle & Aiden are back! This time the friendly Skeptisaurus takes them on an amazing journey through legends of old times, from witches to wizards, explaining how we evolved to see things that aren't always there. But when the myths vanish, our characters see that real scientific discovery is just as exciting, and can even change the world. And that real answers may not be magic, but they are always magical.

"The illustrations are amazing and thought-provoking, and the writing inspires a joy and determination to discover the truth over convenient stories. Please help support science advocacy for children. It's needed now more than ever."

- MODERN SCIENCE MAMA

Also from "Annabelle & Aiden"



J.R. Becker

Annabelle & Aiden in The Story of Life

The Story Of Life.

"Explains evolution to children in a fun and informative way."

-SKEPTICALLY CHALLENGED

WARNING!

THIS BOOK MAY CAUSE CHILDREN TO DEVELOP CURIOSITY, CRITICAL THINKING SKILLS, AN OPEN MIND, AND A THIRST FOR KNOWLEDGE AND DISCOVERY.

ISBN 978-0-9978066-2-5
90000
9 780997 806625

www.AnnabelleAndAiden.com

WWW.Facebook.com/AnnabelleAndAiden